

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /070 W

----- 035373

R 210845Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9319

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOFORN KUALA LUMPUR 1496

E.O. GDS

TAGS: PFOR RP MY

SUBJ: GOM VIEWS ON PHILIPPINE MNLF TALKS

1. DCM CALLED ON POLITICAL UNDERSECRETARY (SOUTHEAST ASIA) YUSOF HITAM ON MARCH 20 FOR DISCUSSION OF MUSLIM REVOLT IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, YUSOF CHARACTERIZED JIDDA TALKS AS ALMOST COMPLETE FAILURE. HE SAID GOM HAD REVIEWED TOHAMY'S REPORT AND FELT IT WAS MISLEADING IN THAT IT SUGGESTED FLEXIBILITY ON PART OF PHILIPPINE DELEGATION. THIS WAS CLEARLY NOT THE CASE. NEITHER SIDE HAD DISPLAYED ANY FLEXIBILITY AND MARCOS HAD MADE SITUATION WORSE SINCE MEETING BY EMPHASIZING "CONSTITUTIONAL" IMPOSSIBILITY OF COMPROMISE SOLUTION INVOLVING ELEMENTS OF AUTONOMY OR FEDERALIZATION. YUSOF DID NOT THINK NUR MISUARI AND MNLF HAD BEEN AT ALL FORTHCOMING BUT CHARACTERIZED THEIR EXTREME DEMANDS FOR AUTONOMY AS NEGOTIATING POSITION. IN HIS VIEW, HAD MELCHOR & COMPANY BEEN PREPARED TO DISCUSS AUTONOMY, MISUARI WOULD HAVE BACKED OFF HIS EXTREME POSITION.

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2. GOM'S LATEST INFORMATION IS THAT SECOND CONFERENCE WILL TAKE PLACE IN JIDDA IN SECOND OR THIRD WEEK OF APRIL. YUSOF IS NOT CONFIDENT THAT ANYTHING WILL COME OUT OF THE SECOND MEETING AND SAID THAT HE THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY IN DEFERENCE TO THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE THAT BOTH SIDES HAD AGREED TO A MEETING IN WHICH THERE MAY NOT BE MUCH TO TALK ABOUT. HE ADDED THAT GOM NOW HAS IMPRESSION THAT INDONESIA HAS WITHDRAWN FROM EFFORTS TO MEDIATE, ALTHOUGH IT WILL BE WILLING TO RESUME ITS EFFORTS AT ANOTHER TIME.

3. YUSOF WHO WAS FORMERLY STATIONED IN MANILA (CIRCA 1970) REFERRED SEVERAL TIMES TO HIS WARM FEELINGS FOR THE PHILIPPINE PEOPLE WHO ARE, AFTER ALL, "FELLOW MALAYS." AT ONE POINT HE SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH THE GENERAL IMPRESSION WAS THAT MALAYSIANS AND INDONESIANS UNDERSTOOD EACH OTHER BUT WERE UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH FILIPINOS, HE DISAGREED. HE FOUND FILIPINOS SYMPATHETIC AND GENERALLY ON HIS "WAVE LENGTH" WHILE JAVANESE MENTALITY WAS MYSTERIOUS. MARCOS, HOWEVER, HE FELT WAS A DEVIOUS AND UNTRUSTWORTHY PERSON WITH A "TOUGH, DEFENSIVE PERSONALITY."

4. DCM EDGED CONVERSATION AROUND TO QUESTION OF INVOLVEMENT OF TUN MUSTAPHA AND SABAH GOVERNMENT IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINE PROBLEM. YUSOF SAID "PROBABLY TRUE" THAT SEVERAL FAMILIES IN SABAH, INCLUDING TUN MUSTAPHA'S, HAD INVOLVED THEMSELVES IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES. THIS WAS PERHAPS NOT A GOOD THING BUT INEVITABLE CONSIDERING THE CLOSE FAMILIAL TIES BETWEEN PEOPLE OF SABAH AND NEARBY ISLANDERS. HE AGREED WITH DCM'S SUGGESTION THAT TUN MUSTAPHA MIGHT BE CHANNEL FOR LIBYAN AID TO REBELS BUT SAID IT WAS A MISTAKE FOR FILIPINOS TO SEE THIS AS SIGNIFICANT. MARCOS IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS SOUNDS AS IF HE BELIEVES THE PROBLEM IS SOMETHING STIRRED UP BY OUTSIDE POWER, I.E. LIBYA, WHICH IS PATENTLY NOT THE CASE. THERE IS NASTY SITUATION IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES THAT IS TEMPTATION FOR OUTSIDERS TO EXPLOIT AND WITH WHICH MARCOS HAD DEALT VERY INEPTLY.

4. COMMENT: YUSOF'S ADMISSION THAT TUN MUSTAPHA
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MIGHT BE AIDING FILIPINO MUSLIM REBELS IS MORE THAN WE
USUALLY CAN EXTRACT FROM OFFICIALS AT ANY LEVEL OF THE GOM
ON THIS POINT.
UNDERHILL

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NNN

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